

House Resolution 2141

By: Representatives Abdul-Salaam of the 74th, Brooks of the 63rd, Williams of the 165th,
Beasley-Teague of the 65th, Thomas of the 55th, and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing and honoring the life of Reverend Doctor James Edward Orange; and for other
2 purposes.

3 WHEREAS, Reverend Doctor James Edward Orange was born in Birmingham, Alabama,
4 on October 29, 1942, to the late Calvin and Ida Orange; and

5 WHEREAS, he was a graduate of Parker High School in Birmingham, attended the former
6 Bishop College in Dallas, Texas, and received his doctorate degree from A. P. Clayton
7 Theological College; and

8 WHEREAS, he was married to the former Cleophas Brown, and they had five children and
9 two grandchildren; and

10 WHEREAS, during his youth, he was very involved in the Civil Rights Movement and was
11 one of the first field staffers hired by the late Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King, Jr., and
12 was instrumental in mobilizing youth throughout the Civil Rights Era; and

13 WHEREAS, without Reverend Orange, there might never have been a march from Selma
14 to Montgomery, Alabama, the march that began the train of events that led to passage of the
15 Voting Rights Act of 1965; and

16 WHEREAS, the death of Jimmie Lee Jackson, killed by an Alabama state trooper while
17 protesting the incarceration of Reverend Doctor Orange, who had been jailed for registering
18 new voters, is regarded as one of the triggers for that famous march; and

19 WHEREAS, in 1968, he was responsible for bringing over 300 busloads of participants to
20 Washington, D. C., for the Poor People's Campaign, which led to the establishment of the
21 food stamp program; and

1 WHEREAS, Reverend Doctor Orange was blessed with exceptional organizational skills and
2 used them in various labor movements, including a hospital workers strike in Charleston,
3 South Carolina; a sanitation strike in Memphis, Tennessee; the J. P. Stevens campaign in
4 Milledgeville, Dublin, and Tifton, Georgia, and Louisville, Kentucky; Justice for Janitors in
5 Atlanta, Georgia; campaigns in Tupelo, Mississippi; the worker's campaign in Birmingham,
6 Alabama; and the state workers campaign in Alabama; and

7 WHEREAS, Reverend Doctor Orange developed, organized, and directed grassroots
8 education/mobilization campaigns that led to the passage of the Workplace Fairness Bill;
9 developed and directed a regional conference on "Organizing Workers' Rights and Coalition
10 Building"; coordinated the "Stop the Violence" conference in Atlanta, Georgia; created and
11 supervised the Atlanta Olympic Community Intervention Team; and accompanied Bill Lucy
12 to Brazil for the INSPIR and CUT convention; and

13 WHEREAS, he retired from the ALF-CIO labor organization and served as a mediator
14 between MARTA and the Transit Union; and

15 WHEREAS, he received a host of community service awards and several keys to different
16 cities throughout the world; and

17 WHEREAS, Reverend Doctor Orange served on the boards of the Atlanta/Fulton County
18 Commission of Children and Youth, the Highlander Research and Education Center, the
19 National Voting Rights Museum and Institute, the National Tenants Organization, the
20 Southern Christian Leadership Conference/WOMEN, Inc., and the Southern Organizing
21 Committee; and

22 WHEREAS, Reverend Doctor Orange served on the Georgia Association of Black Elected
23 Officials (GABEO), and, as ambassador to the Republic of South Africa, he worked with
24 world leaders such as President Nelson Mandela, President Thabo Mbeki, and Premier Sbu
25 Ndebele; and

26 WHEREAS, throughout his life, he held to a philosophy of nonviolence, reflecting peace
27 with dignity.

28 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
29 the members of this body commend Reverend Doctor James Edward Orange, honor his
30 illustrious career, and extend their most sincere condolences to his family and friends.

- 1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
- 2 and directed to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to the family of Reverend
- 3 Doctor James Edward Orange.